Political Science 4040, Section 1: Consequences of War
Spring 2009
Class Meetings: Tuesday and Thursday 1:40-3:00

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Office Hours: Monday 9:30-10:30
Wednesday 9:00-10:00

Course Objectives:
This course has two main objectives. First, the course will highlight the utility of violence both in the international system and within the domestic political arena. While there are any number of moral reasons to object to the use of violence, it will become clear from the readings that coercion is an exceptionally effective method of achieving one’s goals. This leads to the second objective of the course and that is to examine the effects that this violence has on both those who commit the acts (mainly soldiers) and those who are exposed to it (both civilians and soldiers). From these readings, it will become equally clear that these acts of violence have devastating effects on both soldiers and civilians.

This creates a moral dilemma in that coercion is exceptionally effective yet the costs to soldiers and civilians are equally high. In many ways, the effectiveness of coercion is directly correlated to the costs that it imposes. As such, this leads to a critical question: when are the costs associated with coercion acceptable? In other words, when is violence, if ever, justified? In many ways, there is no single answer to that question and the course is designed to both highlight that fact and provide you with information so that you can develop your own answer.

This course is designed to both present important theories of violence and coercion but also to dig deeper into the consequences of the violence. As such, there is a relatively heavy reading load, so it is quite important to stay current on the readings and that includes the optional readings. In addition, since I assume that everyone will come to class prepared, it is also critical that you participate in classroom discussions.

Required Books:


Optional Readings:
-Note that you do not need to purchase all of these books, but will be required to purchase one from each section.

Section I: War from the Soldier’s Perspective


Section II: War from the Civilian Perspective


Section III: War from the Literary Perspective


Course Requirements:
Participation (10% of final grade): Participation in class discussion is critical for this course. As such, you will need to actively participate in five (5) classes throughout the semester. At the end of the classes in which you felt you participated, you need to write on a sheet of paper your name and how you participated and hand this in to me. I will either accept your participation and count it towards your grade, or reject it (in which case it will not be recorded).

Final Exam (30% of final grade): You will have a final exam (May 7th) that will consist of 2 essay questions. The questions will test not only how well you have learned the course material, but also the extent to which you have integrated the knowledge. Simply repeating the information will not garner an “A” because it is assumed you will have learned the material.

Presentation (15% of final grade): You will have to take part in a classroom presentation once during the semester. The presentation will be based on one of the optional readings and will be a group presentation. You will be able to sign-up for a presentation later in the semester and will receive more detailed instructions.

Papers (45% total or 15% for each paper): You will be required to write 3 (three) papers in the course of the semester. These papers will be 5-7 pages and based on the optional readings. For each of the three groups of the optional readings, you will be required to read one of those books and write a paper. Before the papers are due, I will provide more detailed instructions as to the contents of the paper. That being said, you can (and should) start reading the book well before you get the more detailed assignment.

Important notes: There are three additional notes on grading. First, plagiarism will not be tolerated at all. There are no excuses, no exceptions, and no second chances. If you are unaware of what constitutes plagiarism or the consequences, then review the LSU guidelines at http://www.lsu.edu/judicialaffairs/Plagiarism.htm. Second, you are required to complete all assignments. If you do not complete an assignment, then you will automatically receive an “F” for the course, regardless of your other grades. Third, all late assignments will be penalized one-half letter grade per day.
Reading Schedule

Section I: The Utility of Violence
1-13: Introduction to Course.
1-15: Schelling: Chapter 1.
1-27: Schelling: Chapter 3.
1-29: Schelling: Chapter 4.
2-3: Schelling: Chapter 5.
2-5: Schelling: Chapter 6.
2-10: Schelling: Chapter 7.
2-12: Class Presentations: War from the Soldier's Perspective.

Section II: The Choice to Use Violence
2-17: Kalyvas: Chapters 1-2.
2-19: Kalyvas: Chapter 3.
2-24: Mardi Gras Break
2-26: Kalyvas: Chapter 4.
3-3: Kalyvas: Chapter 5.
3-5: Kalyvas: Chapter 6.
3-10: Spring Break
3-12: Spring Break
3-17: Kalyvas: Chapter 7.
3-19: Kalyvas: Chapter 8.
3-24: Kalyvas: Chapters 10-11.
3-26: Class Presentations: War from the Civilian Perspective

Section III: The (In)Justice of Violence
3-31: Petersen: Chapters 1-2.
4-2: Petersen: Chapter 3.
4-7: Petersen: Chapter 4.
4-9: Petersen: Chapters 5-6.
4-14: Petersen: Chapter 7.
4-16: Petersen: Chapters 8-9.

4-21: Petersen: Chapter 10.
4-23: Petersen: Chapter 11.

4-28: Class Presentations: War from the Literary Perspective
4-30: Final Exam Review

Final Exam: Thursday May 7th, 12:30-2:30.